

In the Specification:

No changes are made to the specification at this time.

In the Claims:

No new matter is introduced in the following amended and new claims. Support for new claims may be found in the specification at pp. 1, 9 and 10.

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1. (Original) A method for treating or preventing ulcerative colitis and other associated diseases in target cells, comprising administering a compound to the target cells, wherein said compound inhibits interaction between CEP and hTM.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the compound inhibits the interaction between CEP and hTM by physically binding to either CEP or hTM within the target cell.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the compound is a recombinant protein that comprises a functional hTM binding site from CEP.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the compound causes a decreased expression of the CEP protein in the target cells.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the compound prevents secretion of the CEP-hTM complex.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the compound affects either cytoskeletal organization or active secretion.

7. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the compound is either phorbol-12-myristate-13-acetate, monensin or methylamine.

8. (Original) A method to treat or prevent ulcerative colitis and other associated diseases, comprising administering a recombinant protein that comprises a functional hTM binding site from CEP, wherein said functional binding site is operably linked to a non-antigenic protein.

9. (Original) A method to screen for drugs that are useful for treating ulcerative colitis and other associated diseases, comprising administering a drug to human colon cancer cells and determining the amount of CEP-hTM complex, a decrease in CEP-hTM complex being indicative of therapeutic value of the drug.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the amount of CEP-hTM complex is determined by quantifying the amount of hTM secreted from the colon cancer cells.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the colon cancer cells are LS-180 cells.

12. (Currently amended) A diagnostic method for detecting inflammatory bowel diseases and ~~associated with an autoimmune response to h TM in affected tissue diseases associated with inflammatory bowel disease~~ in colon epithelial cells comprising detecting CEP-hTM complexes in a tissue, wherein the presence of CEP-hTM is indicative of the disease inflammatory bowel disease.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the CEP-hTM complexes are detected in extracellular space of a the affected tissue.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the CEP-hTM complexes are detected in intracellular space of a the affected tissue.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the tissue is colon epithelium selected from the group consisting of musculoskeletal, skin and mouth, hepatobiliary, ocular, and the extracellular spaces of the large intestines.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein the diseases can be selected from the group consisting of colonic type arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, hypertrophic osteoarthropathy, clubbing, periostitis and metastatic Crohn's disease.

18. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein the diseases can be selected from the group consisting of erythema nodosum, pyoderma gangrenosum, aphthous ulcers, vesiculopustular eruption and necrotizing vasculitis.

19. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein the diseases can be selected from the group consisting of fissures, fistulas, oral Crohn's disease, drug rashes.

20. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein the diseases can be selected from the group consisting of acrodermatitis enteropathica, vitamin K and vitamin B purpura, disorders of the skin appendages, vitiligo, psoriasis, amyloidosis and epidermolysis bullosa acquisita.

21. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein the diseases can be selected from the group consisting of primary sclerosing cholangitis, bile duct carcinoma, autoimmune chronic active hepatitis, pericholangitis, portal fibrosis and cirrhosis.

22. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein the diseases can be selected from the group consisting of uveitis, episcleritis, scleromalacia, corneal ulcers and retinal vascular disease.

22. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein inflammatory bowel disease

includes Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.